

September 17, 2008

To: Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council

From: Linda Krop, Chair, Conservation Working Group

Re: **CWG Report – September 17, 2008 Meeting**

**Attendance:** Linda Krop, Chair (EDC); Greg Helms, Vice Chair (The Ocean Conservancy); Jean Holmes (LWVSB); Shiva Polefka (EDC); Michael Smith (Gray Whales Count); Debra Herring

**CINMS Staff Present:** Mike Murray

## **I. INTRODUCTIONS**

## **II. OCEAN ACIDIFICATION**

- A. **Final CWG Report:** Shiva presented the proposed final Ocean Acidification report for CWG review and comment. He summarized the findings, and then walked through the recommendations in detail. The CWG suggested that the Education component of the program be expanded to include ideas for how we can reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. We noted that a lot of information already exists, so we wouldn't have to "re-invent the wheel" to include this information. Mike suggested that, after the report is adopted, Shiva should meet with the Sanctuary education staff to discuss the report and its recommendations, and to develop specific ideas for the education component. Finally, it was suggested that Shiva explicitly mention the State as a partner in the recommendations.
- B. **SAC Presentations:** Dr. Feely and Dr. Hofmann will present at the SAC meeting. Shiva will then go over the findings and recommendations of the report, and we will move for SAC approval.

## **III. SAC ISSUES**

- A. **Subcommittee recommendations re Emergency Response Plan re Reducing Ship Strikes on Large Cetaceans**

The SAC will receive updates regarding sightings, the Notice to Mariners recommending reduced ship speeds, and the analysis of data regarding actual ship speeds.

The Subcommittee will provide an update regarding ideas for developing a long-term plan for this issue. After much discussion, the Subcommittee

decided to recommend foregoing the establishment of a new Working Group due to limitations on staff time and resources, and the concern that the Working Group and SAC could develop recommendations that the Sanctuary does not have authority to implement. Instead, the Subcommittee decided to maintain the Subcommittee structure, with support from existing Working Groups (e.g., Conservation, SET, RAP). We can expand those Working Groups to bring in additional experts and stakeholders; we can also invite experts to speak to the SAC or we could schedule special forums/workshops. We noted the importance of coordinating with the California Air Resources Board and local air districts, because they also have an interest in reducing ship speeds (for air quality reasons). Finally, the Subcommittee recommended adding the California Resources Agency seat to the Subcommittee roster.

**B. Marine Reserves/MLPA**

The SAC will receive an update regarding the Channel Islands 5-Year review.

Greg provided an update regarding the State MLPA process. The Blue Ribbon Task Force and Science Advisory Team have been appointed, and the Regional Stakeholder Group will be announced on 9/26. We discussed potential SAC action to communicate our interest in maintaining the Channel Island reserves. Greg pointed out that, legally, the Channel Islands reserves cannot be excluded from the process. However, we hope that the MLPA participants will respect the process that resulted in the establishment of these reserves, and recognize the value of the monitoring data on the reserves.

**C. Aquaculture: OCS Alternative Uses Proposal**

Linda and Shiva handed out a comment letter submitted by EDC and Heal the Bay in response to MMS's proposal to consider Alternative Energy Projects and Alternative Uses of OCS facilities. The comments focused primarily on the aquaculture component of the proposal, reiterating the recommendations adopted by the SAC and pointing out that NOAA is already engaged in the issue.

**D. SAC Open Seats**

Linda advised the CWG that there are several seats on the SAC that will be open at the end of the year.